

NOPHNRCSE Annual Conference Site Selection Process

Principal Criteria

- Presentations by State Conservationists
- Cost analysis
- National Leadership Team participation
- Rotation through regions
- Two-year advance site selections
- Timing of Conference
- Allow all NOPHNRCSE members to vote

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Purpose & Use: *NOPHNRCSE criteria and guidelines in determining future conference locations.*

- 1. Presentations by State Conservationists-** This guideline is intended to provide State Conservationist and their state leadership teams timely and sufficient information to aid them in developing their presentation proposals to serve as a “host state.”

Evaluation Guidelines

- a. State Conservationists wishing to host an annual conference must make a presentation at NOPHNRCSE’s annual conference. STC shall do it in person &/or designee. With the exception of the 2009 conference, the presentation will be made *TWO YEARS* in advance for the year in which they wish to be considered to host.
 - b. The presentation can be formal with PowerPoint or informal but keeping in mind that other states may also be competing for the same year conference and quality of presentation will likely weigh in on the scoring and selection process.
 - c. Electronic copies of the presentation must be sent to the Site Selection Committee Chair no later than two weeks prior to the established current year’s conference date. A final electronic &/or hard copies of the presentation should be left with the Site Selection Committee immediately after the presentation is given.
 - d. State Conservationist should also include brief descriptions of 3 to 5 potential tours that would appeal to a wide range of attendees. Tours should target natural resource conservation projects, outreach, civil rights and/or program accessibility activities, areas with unique or historical significance, and other sites that would encourage broad participation.
 - e. State Conservationist should include three Hotel Bids that can easily host the conference. Bids should include guest room costs, meeting rooms costs, banquet costs, hospitality room, other amenities, as well as type of facilities available such as fitness room, restaurants, business center, lounge, etc. (*See Guideline # 2 with attached Cost Analysis template*)
- 2. Cost analysis (This guideline includes a cost analysis and feasibility for traveler template attachment that should be used by the bidding state/STC).** The cost analysis and feasibility will contain all pertinent information and determine an estimate on how much money NOPHNRCSE, agencies and members will have to pay to attend the annual conference. This will help eliminate bids that are too costly or considered not feasible. Deadlines will vary by year and bid package may be revised to meet the needs of the organization.
 - a. NOPHNRCSE will send out a cover letter inviting states within the region to participate in the host state process. The cost analysis and feasibility for traveler attachments must accompany the cover letter and be part of the packet of information sent to states.

- 3. National Leadership Team participation-**The general purpose of this guideline is to ensure the conference site selection process looks at ways to help accommodate the attendance and participation by NRCS leadership. In the spirit of valued partnerships, this will ultimately lend itself to an effective and successful conference.

Evaluation Guidelines

- Annual Conference locations must be located within a reasonable distance, approximately 30 miles, of *major airports*. Extra consideration will be given to free shuttle services. These requirements are aimed to strongly encourage and facilitate attendance by National, Regional and State Leadership personnel. Convenience of getting to and from the conference is paramount to getting high attendances and ensuring successful events. This will also help guide the conference location decisions.
- If possible, NOPHNRCE will consider hosting the conference in conjunction with at least one other employee organization or perhaps even other agency partners. This will greatly add to the effectiveness of the meeting and encourage a larger number of attendees.

4. Rotation through regions

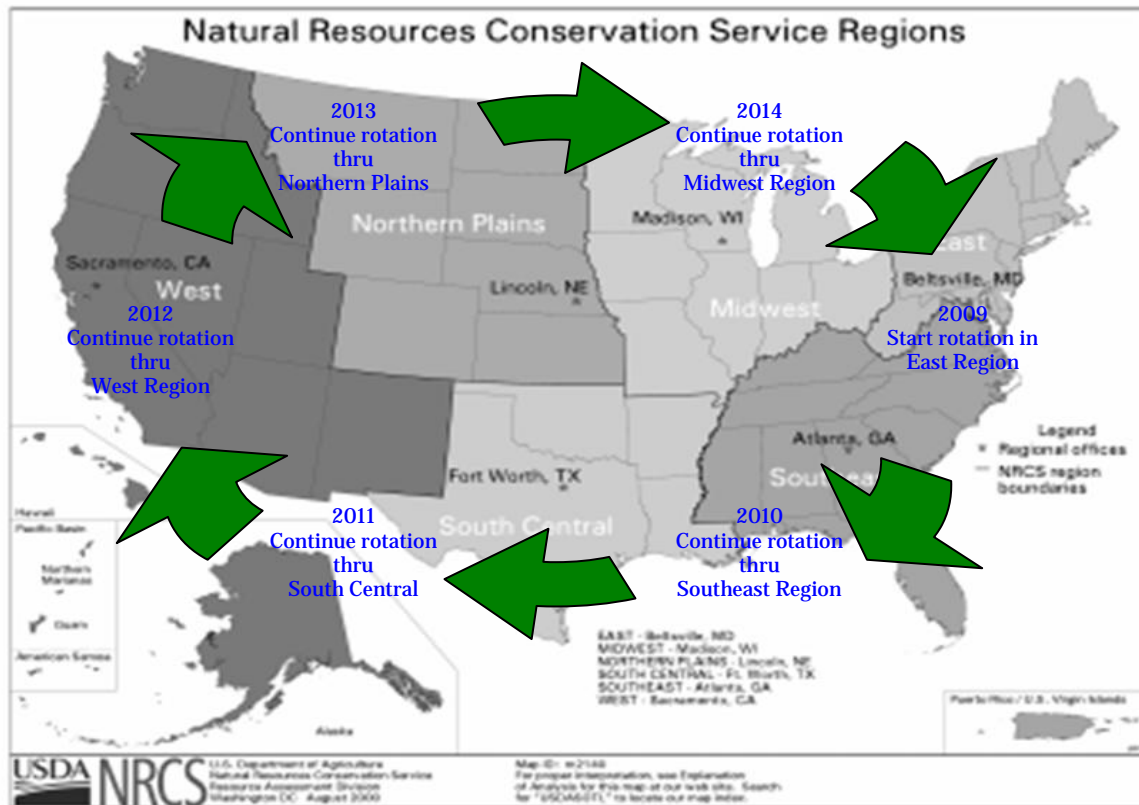
Evaluation Guidelines

- NOPHNRCE will send out a cover letter inviting states within the region to participate in the host state process. The organization will rotate the annual conference according to the regional succession. NOPHNRCE has elected to use NRCS' original regional structure to determine the regional rotation. This structure also coincides with the organization's current regional representation.
- Annual conferences should be determined two years in advance (*See guideline # 5 definition*).
- The Clockwise Rotation sequence is as follows (based on original NRCS regions):
East ⇒ South East ⇒ South Central ⇒ West ⇒ Northern Plains ⇒ Midwest ↻ (Repeat Rotation)
- Priority will be given to the states within the region of consideration for the two-year period and deemed eligible to submit a proposal and bid to host the conference. If no states within that region submit a proposal, then NOPHNRCE will move to the next region in sequence.

Original NRCS Regions

<u>East</u>	<u>Southeast</u>	<u>South Central</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>Northern Plains</u>	<u>Mid-West</u>
CT	AL	AR	*AK	CO	IA
DE	FL	LA	AZ	KS	IL
DC	GA	OK	CA	MT	IN
MA	KY	TX	*Guam	NE	MI
MD	MS		*HI	ND	MN
ME	NC		ID	SD	MO
NH	*PR		NM	WY	OH
NJ	SC		NV		WI
NY	TN		OR		
PA	VA		UT		
RI			WA		
VT					
WV					

*denotes States & Territories excluded as hosts due reasons listed in established criteria



- 5. Two-year advance site selections--** The general purpose of the advanced site selection process is to maintain a balanced regional rotation, allowing the organization the flexibility to hold the annual training conference in all regions of the country. Additionally, interested states will have ample time to coordinate and prepare their presentation proposals. Likewise, NOPHNRCS Planning Committees will have advance knowledge of host states to adequately plan the annual training conference.

Evaluation Guidelines

- a. Based on the established regional rotation schedule, the membership will vote and select which states will host subsequent years during the current year's annual conference. In order to establish the two-year rotation, members will vote in 2008 on the host states for the next two years. In 2009, and every year after, the membership will vote to select the host state for year two in the site selection process.

For Example:

- 2008 Annual Conference- select host states for year's 2009 & 2010
- 2009 Annual Conference-select host state for 2011
- 2010 Annual Conference- select host state for 2012
- Repeat Pattern for Site Selection Process

- c. Due to high travel costs, reduced member attendance, difficulty for NHQ leadership attendance, and other critical factors, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and Guam will be excluded as host states. If future extenuating circumstances change or other opportunities present themselves, the

National Council will maintain the flexibility to allow these states/territories to host the annual conference under a “special host state proposal. This will also require ratification by a membership vote.

- 6. Timing of Conference-** Traditionally, NOPHNRCSE has held the annual conference in the June/July timeframe, which has proven to be an ideal period. To the extent possible, all efforts should be made to maintain consistency in the time of year the conference is held. This will help maximize the attendance rate and ensure a successful conference. Deviating from this timeframe should only be considered as a last resort.

Evaluation Guidelines

- a. Conference timing must include time periods that have the least weather complications and that ensure the greatest likelihood of fitting into budget plans of the agency and the individual.
- b. Less consideration will be given to those time periods of adverse weather conditions (winter), and budget uncertainty (August thru October).

- 7. Allow all NOPHNRCSE members to vote—**A web-based voting program will be developed on the NOPHNRCSE website to allow members not attending the conference to vote for future conference sites. This creates a more equitable process by providing all members in ‘good standing’ an opportunity to cast their vote.

Evaluation Guidelines

- a. STC Power point presentations, along with other pertinent information, will be posted on the NOPHNRCSE website the week prior to the conference. STC’s will need to submit an advanced electronic copy. Presentation not received prior to the conference can still be posted on the website immediately following the presentation. Members who are unable to attend the conference can vote online immediately after viewing the posted STC presentations.
- b. All members shall be notified and made aware of the conference voting process through the organization’s website, newsletter (La Voz)—*the edition just prior to the conference date*, and a mass email to all members on the first day of the Annual Conference. *(See sample news article and email message developed as an attachment).*
- c. Non-attending members must complete an online ballot which includes the member’s name and region in order to verify one vote per member as well as the individual’s membership status. To ensure confidentiality only committee members will see the results. Deadline to cast online vote will be COB on the Wednesday during the week of the conference. This will give the committee a chance to tally the paper ballots as well as the online computer ballots.
- d. State(s) selected to host will be announced during the banquet on Thursday night and posted on the NOPHNRCSE website by the following morning.

****For Site Selection Committee: A Points Matrix template has been developed to be used in scoring state presentations/bids to host conference. Use matrix to quantify and document selection results.**